

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 23 with the following paragraphs:

These objects, in accordance with a first aspect of the invention, are achieved by means of a process for treating the outer surface of containers whereby the containers, such as bottles, are sent to a coating plant that uses a single bottle-transferring and conveying chain. The bottles are secured to the chain with specific grippers as soon as the bottles enter the plant. The bottles are conveyed, while held vertically by the gripping devices, to a coating segment having two or more tanks containing the coating solution. The tanks are movable according to the feeding direction of the chain and are moved sequentially, first, in an upward direction receive several bottles to be dipped into the coating solution at the same time, and, then, in a downward direction in order to remove the bottles from the coating solution.

A protective guard is placed around the bottles after removal from the coating solution. The bottles are spun in order to eliminate any excess paint. Next, the bottles are turned into a horizontal position and rotated slowly around their axes to obtain a uniform thickness paint coating. The bottles are then sent to specific segments of the plant in order to dry and cure the coating.

In accordance with another aspect of the invention, the above objects are achieved by sending the bottles to a coating plant having a single device for conveying bottles, or containers, throughout the plant. This conveyor is provided with a chain and evenly distributed gripping devices, which grip the bottles in a loading station, and are able to rotate on a plane perpendicular to the feeding direction of the conveying device in order to place said bottles, or containers, from a vertical position into a

horizontal one.

A coating segment of the plant is located after the bottle-gripping station, comprising two or more paint-filled tanks placed under a wheel or rotating drum around which the device for conveying the bottles winds around in order to change feeding direction. The movement of the tanks is synchronized with the movement of the wheel or drum, and move up or down so that several bottles can be dipped into and removed from each tank.

The coating plant also has devices suitable to spin the bottles for a preestablished amount of time, as well as devices adapted to surround each bottle with a protective guard. The coating plant further has devices suitable to rotate the gripping devices on a plane perpendicular to the feeding direction in order to place the bottles from a vertical position into in a horizontal position. The coating plant yet further has devices for drying the paint, and devices for curing the resin contained in the paint.